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->From the Editor's Keyboard

"Saying it like it is!"

Well, here we are in the last day of July! Again, I ask, where has this year gone? The winter months sure stuck around for a long, long time - so why can't we enjoy a "longer" summer? I guess there's no real answer to that question!

Windows 10 is out - did you all rush out to buy or download it already? I only have one Windows-based system running in my house these days; and it's still running XP. While I really enjoy XP, I'm wondering whether or not this old system could even be upgraded to Windows 10! Perhaps I should do a little research to find out. I'm in no rush, however; I've learned ver the years not to rush out and get the first "edition" of a new system until a good majority of the bugs have been worked out. I've already heard that there have been some issues with Windows 10, so I feel comfortable sticking to my "philosophy!"

It's a quiet week, this week. Not a plethora of news, but what we've reported this week is very interesting. So, we hope that you're sitting back relaxed, and enjoying this week's issue!

Until next time...

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!

Angry Birds 2 : The Birds Are Back (Again)

Mobile game maker Rovio just released Angry Birds 2. You are correct in thinking that is a ridiculous name.

Rovio has released a dozen Angry Birds games, including the original in 2009. There was Angry Birds Seasons and Angry Birds Space. Angry Birds Star Wars and its sequel. We role-played in Angry Birds Epic, and we transformed in Angry Birds Transformers. If you count spinoffs like Angry Birds Stella and Angry Birds Pop!, we re up to something like 15 Angry Birds games in six years.

So it takes some serious chutzpah to release a game called Angry Birds 2 in 2015 and Rovio has never been short on chutzpah. Within seconds of topping the App Store charts, Angry Birds was franchised into pop culture ubiquity. I have an Angry Birds spoon somewhere, I m sure of it.

But, to Rovio s credit, this new game actually has some new stuff in it. Here s what to expect from the first 13th 16th-ish Angry Birds sequel.

Nothing screams 2015 like making your game free to play. Angry Birds 2 costs nothing to download, but, of course, that s how they get you.

Fail a level and you lose a heart; lose five hearts and you ll need to wait a half hour before you get more. You can use gems to purchase spells that ll help you take down levels quickly and easily. Surprise, surprise: You can buy those gems with real-world cash. If you fail a level but need just one more fling, you can agree to watch short ads to gain an extra bird. Ads, cash, or time: Nobody flies for free.

Angry Birds 2 is hands-down the best-looking game so far in the series. Its colorful characters burst off the screen, the new backgrounds add a sense of place and improved depth of field, and the quirky story bits are woven neatly into the game s flow. This new version hasn t just been cobbled together from old ones.

Angry Birds 2 also introduces a few new features. For example, levels are now broken up into two parts; waste too many birds on the first structure, and you won t have enough firepower to take down the second one.

Offsetting that is the new ability to choose which bird to fling, rather than tossing them in a set order. Frequent boss fights liven up the action, and the aforementioned spells offer a tempting way out if you re really stuck on a level. There s a new Silver bird, too, though it takes a while before you get to fling her.

Despite such new bits, the basic idea hasn t changed: You still slingshot birds to topple structures and take out piggies. You still aim for explosive crates. You still use the yellow bird for wood and the blue birds for glass and ice. Cut out the new resources, microtransactions, and slick look, and this is still very much Angry Birds.

I ve played the game for a few hours now (counting heart-replenishing wait times) and can safely report back that it s good. Rovio s wonderful physics system never really gets the respect it deserves. A few smart tweaks—such as the ability to fast-forward through each shot rather than sitting and waiting for each little chunk of wood to stop rattling around—keep the game moving along nicely. It s a legitimately fun

mobile game.

But at the same time, Angry Birds 2 can t quite get out of its own way. Between the gems, the hearts, and the occasional ads, it feels cluttered: There are too many resources, too many pop-up windows, too many confusing rewards. Waiting for lives to replenish is a bummer.

To be honest, I would gladly pay a few bucks for the core game, rather than having to wade through the annoying gates of an ostensibly free one. I guess Rovio would prefer to take my money the slow, painful way or not at all.

You can decide how much to give yourself by grabbing Angry Birds 2 for iOS or Android devices.

China Lifts Its 15-Year Ban on Video Game Consoles

China is lifting its ban on the manufacturing and sale of video game consoles in its country, which opens a large door of opportunity for the likes of Sony, Microsoft, and Nintendo. This expands China s previous declarations of more openness for video game consoles, which were still laden with restrictions.

The new rules will benefit foreign and domestic console makers, according to The Wall Street Journal. Last year, China eased its ban on video game consoles, but limited the list of welcome foreign console manufacturers and required them to operate only in Shanghai s free trade zone. This pilot was successful, according to China s Ministry of Culture.

Chinese gamers have been limited to PC and mobile video games because of the restrictions on video game consoles. But the statement from the country s Ministry of Culture lifting the ban, which has been in place since 2000, will mean gamers in that huge market will have access to Sony s PlayStation, Microsoft s Xbox, and Nintendo s Wii consoles. The country s strict review of video game content will likely remain in place.

This is great news for us, a Sony Computer Entertainment spokeswoman told The Wall Street Journal.

The gaming market in China is estimated to be worth \$22.2 billion this year, according to gaming research firm Newzoo BV. China is second only to Japan when it comes to digital gaming in Asia, according to SuperData Research.

The Xbox One and PlayStation 4 are already available in China, though sales have been rather unimpressive. Only about 550,000 of those two consoles are expected to sell in the country this year.

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Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Hackers Used Twitter To Target US Systems

Russian-based hackers are using malicious software concealed in Twitter images to relay commands and steal data from US computer networks, security researchers said this week.

A report by the security firm FireEye examined stealth techniques used by hacker groups believed to be sponsored by the Russian government.

"Using a variety of techniques - from creating an algorithm that generates daily Twitter handles to embedding pictures with commands - the developers... have devised a particularly effective tool," FireEye said in the report released Wednesday.

Security researchers previously linked Russian-based hacker groups to efforts to penetrate computer networks at the White House and elsewhere.

FireEye said this group, dubbed APT29, is probably sponsored by the Russian government. It has been active since at least late 2014, according to the researchers.

The report said this particular attack tool, dubbed "Hammertoss," generates and looks for a different Twitter handle each day and seeks to blend in with normal traffic on the messaging platform.

Inside images generated in tweets, the hackers insert malicious code that enables them to steal data or gain access to computers that view the images.

"While the image appears normal, it actually contains steganographic data," or the practice of concealing a message, image or file within another message, according to FireEye.

The technique "undermines network defenders' ability to identify Twitter accounts used for (attacks), discern malicious network traffic from legitimate activity and locate the malicious payloads downloaded by the malware," the report said.

"This makes Hammertoss a powerful backdoor at the disposal of one of the most capable threat groups we have observed."

Google Refuses French Order To Apply "Right To Be Forgotten" Globally

Google Inc is refusing to bow to an order from the French privacy watchdog to scrub search results worldwide when users invoke their "right to be forgotten" online, it said on Thursday, exposing itself to possible fines.

The French data protection authority, the CNIL, in June ordered the search engine group to de-list on request search results appearing under a person's name from all its websites, including Google.com.

That stemmed from a ruling in May last year by the European Court of

Justice that European residents can ask search engines, such as Google or Microsoft Corp's Bing, to delete results that turn up under a search for their name when they are out of date, irrelevant or inflammatory, the so-called right to be forgotten.

Google complied with the ruling and has since received more than a quarter of a million removal requests, according to its transparency report. It has accepted about 41 percent of them.

However, it has limited removals to its European websites, such as Google.de in Germany or Google.fr in France, arguing that over 95 percent of searches made from Europe are done through local versions of Google.

In a blog post on Thursday, the U.S. company said it believed no one country should have the authority to control what content someone in a second country can access.

"We've worked hard to implement the right to be forgotten ruling thoughtfully and comprehensively in Europe, and we ll continue to do so," wrote Peter Fleischer, Google's global privacy counsel. "But as a matter of principle, therefore, we respectfully disagree with the CNIL s assertion of global authority on this issue and we have asked the CNIL to withdraw its formal notice."

The CNIL said it would look into Google's appeal and decide whether to accept it in two months.

In case of a rejection Google may face fines, albeit small compared with the company's turnover.

"We have taken note of Google's arguments which are partly of a political nature. The CNIL, on the other hand, has relied on a strictly legal reasoning," said a spokeswoman.

Google warned that applying the right to be forgotten globally would trigger a "race to the bottom" where "the Internet would only be as free as the world's least free place".

Its stance was upheld in February by a group of experts appointed by the company to guide it on how to apply the landmark ruling.

"Global de-listing remains too controversial without an international agreement," said Luciano Floridi, a professor at Oxford University who was on the panel advising Google.

However, European regulators and some legal experts think Google ought to apply the ruling globally as it is too easy to circumvent it by switching from one version of Google to another.

FBI Again Thwarts Tor To Unmask Visitors to A Dark Web Child Sex Abuse Site

The FBI has once again launched its harpoons into the Deep Web, piercing the anonymizing layers of Tor to drag out the identities of two New York men who were indicted earlier this month on charges of possessing child abuse images.

The FBI doesn't reveal how it bypasses Tor to track down the true IP

addresses it's designed to obscure.

(One exception was when the US government found itself defending the methods with which agents, without a warrant, managed to pull back the curtain and reveal the location of the hidden website for Silk Road.)

Some observers have suggested that court documents hint at the possibility of the FBI having planted a drive-by installation of some kind of malware to unmask the two men who allegedly possessed child porn.

As Motherboard reports, Stanford computer science and law expert Jonathan Mayer spotted a passage that journalist Nate Raymond had uncovered in the filings and which Mayer says confirms that the FBI deployed malware - what's called a "Network Investigative Technique" in the court filing - to obtain the men's real IP addresses.

Foiling Tor to pull out the true identities behind the terrorists, paedophiles, gun-runners, drug dealers, sex traffickers and other serious criminals on the Deep Web has picked up steam in the past few years, as has interest in the FBI's techniques to do it.

But while the FBI used some sort of IP-revealing trick, that doesn't necessarily mean there's zombie malware running riot through the world, downloading onto innocent people's computers.

As Naked Security's Paul Ducklin points out, the FBI doesn't necessarily need to install malware to have a good chance of figuring out who or where you really are.

It doesn't require a drive-by download or a true drive-by-install onto the computers of all visitors to the Dark Web site.

The FBI appears to have enough tools in its kit that agents don't need to permanently plant something onto your computer.

Rather, a transient, one-shot shellcode payload is sufficient - no persistence needed (that's a fancy word for software that unexpectedly keeps on running after you reboot, or log out and back in, or even just after you close your browser).

Just a link that ties some anonymous traffic to a specific computer during one specific time slot, paired with whatever other evidence the prosecution presents, would surely be enough to press charges.

While there's been a lot written about how difficult it is for law enforcement agencies such as the FBI to deal with the Dark Web, the reality is that in the past few years, we've seen:

The Dark Web isn't necessarily all that tough to map. One researcher, for example, has been making a map, pulled from the places on the normal, indexed internet where users talk about the Dark Web and direct each other to specific hidden sites. Granted, while many parts aren't all that hard to find or visualise, mapping this land still entails tracking a fast-moving target: some 10% of sites posted on Pastebin are deleted within 48 hours, given that most are set up temporarily by criminals to point to illegal services before quickly being deleted.

We might be overestimating how many sites are out there. It's been estimated that the Dark Web only has about 7000 active sites at any one time. How much of those are devoted to images of child abuse? There's an

interesting, though unverified, post on Reddit from an admitted pedophile who says there are very few, in spite of what the media describes as a Deep Web awash in child porn: ?Of the hundred or so advertised onion [child porn] sites, only about 5 are imageboards or communities actively trading [child porn]. The rest of the sites are stories, links, and other non [child porn] material. Lack of new material and few onion [child porn] sites the past years made users open to trying the honeypot site to see if a server with new material was made.

NASA s mission to explore the universe now includes the Deep Web. It recently joined up with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) on its Memex program, which is working to access and catalog this mysterious online world. Memex tools were actually used by law enforcement to track down sex traffickers for about a year before Memex was revealed.

A number of investigations have used undercover policy, malware and/or clever technology. One example is Silk Road, once one of the top markets for illicit drugs and other contraband and services. The FBI didn't foil Tor to get at Silk Road just once, mind you: it took it down multiple times. The site's reboot, Silk Road 2.0, was taken down after a successful, 6-month attack on Tor.

It matters whether the recent bust involved a so-called watering hole attack, which would have downloaded malware onto the computer of every one of the unnamed site's 200,000+ visitors, many of whom well may have been innocent when it comes to possessing child porn.

If that's what the FBI did in fact use, it was not only an impressive feat - given that it was done with only one search warrant - but also a worrisome one from a legal standpoint, given that such a so-called "general warrant" is extraordinarily broad.

But the fact is, we don't really know how the FBI got the true IP addresses of the men it indicted.

All we know is that it's got far more than just one way to peel an onion.

Facebook Can't Say 'No' to New York, Says New York

Here's the story so far.

Back in 2013, New York (the state, not just the city) decided to take on a bunch of public servants it said were fraudsters.

The state alleged that close to 400 employees, including police officers, were benefits cheats, claiming illnesses and disabilities they didn't have.

By all accounts, this wasn't just a case of a few staff throwing a few sickies.

Reuters reports that the state has already recovered nearly \$25,000,000 in paid-out benefits, an average of more than \$60,000 each for everyone fingered in the investigation.

Some of those under investigation even allegedly used the 9/11 terrorist

attacks as a bogus reason why they were unable to function normally.

Unsurprisingly, part of the evidence an important part, one imagines involved information published on social media.

(Simply put, if you're incapacitated enough that you can't get out of bed, you're not supposed to be snapped on the beach playing volleyball with your buddies.)

As Reuters wryly put it:

Prosecutors said Facebook pages showed public employees who claimed to be disabled riding jet skis, playing golf and participating in martial arts events.

As you can imagine, that meant a raft of "please hand over user data" warrants served on Facebook.

In 2014, Facebook complied with the warrants, but only under protest.

The social networking giant then mounted a legal appeal, effectively on behalf of all its users, to argue that this sort of broad-brush warrant should not be allowed because it amounts to "unreasonable search."

That sort of thing is explicitly prohibited by the US Bill of Rights (specifically, by the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution).

In the end, apparently only 62 of the 381 people in the investigation were actually charged, giving some credibility to Facebook's position.

But a New York Appeals Court has found against Facebook.

Interestingly, the Appeals Court doesn't appear to have given an explicit green light to the warrants themselves, but rather to have concluded that the admissibility of the evidence was not for Facebook to challenge.

In other words, Facebook was duty-bound to hand over the data, and it was up to each defendant to argue, in each individual case, whether the data gleaned from Facebook could be used or not.

Facebook, reasoned the court, couldn't play the inadmissibility card on behalf of all, or indeed any, of its users.

What next?

Apparently, Facebook is planning to appeal the outcome of the appeal, so you can expect this saga to continue for as long as each side's lawyers have the will (and the funding) to continue.

Where do you stand on this?

Should Facebook and others be sticking up for everyone, implicitly including the crooks amongst us, in order to keep investigators tightly focused?

Or is 62 out of 381 (with \$25,000,000 allegedly recovered into the public purse, don't forget) a suitable sort of prosecution-to-search ratio?

Ugh. Flash. The technology that just about everyone hates and that still just won t die. While Flash is in its last throes out now that YouTube, Twitch and Mozilla s Firefox browser have moved away from it, plenty of other websites still use it to deliver both video and games, among other things. Now a new movement called Occupy Flash has started up to get web users to give Flash one final big push over the cliff by uninstalling it on their computer or disabling it in their browsers.

To help people get rid of Flash on their devices, Occupy Flash has helpfully posted links to instructions for removing Flash from different platforms. Below we ve written up a quick summary.

Uninstall Flash on Windows:

Download and install the Windows Flash uninstaller from Adobe here. Close down all browsers and any other programs that use Flash. Open up the uninstaller program and just click Uninstall and it should do all the work for you.

To check if the uninstall was success, click on the Start menu and click Run. Then paste C:\Windows\system32\Macromed\Flash into the query box. If the installation was successful, there will be no folders found. If there are still folders lurking about, you can delete them manually.

Uninstall Flash on Mac:

If you re running OS X 10.6 or later, you ll want to use this uninstaller. If you re running OS X 10.4 or 10.5, you ll want to use this uninstaller. For OS 10.3 and earlier, use this uninstaller.

In the Safari browser, select Window > Downloads. Open the uninstaller by double clicking it.

Close all your browsers and then click Uninstall to remove Flash.

You may also want to delete the following directories after uninstalling Flash: /Library/Preferences/Macromedia/Flash\ Player and /Library/Caches/Adobe/Flash\ Player

Disabling Flash from Google Chrome browser:

In your browser s address bar, type in chrome:plugins. Locate Flash and click disable.

And that s it! Flash will hopefully be gone from your computer and websites that are still using it (we re looking at you, Google Analytics!) will hopefully get the hint that it s time to move on to a new technology.

Windows 10 Entices Millions in First Day

Some 14 million people installed the Windows 10 operating system in the first 24 hours following its release, Microsoft said, calling the response "overwhelmingly positive."

The company said its new operating system aimed at computers, mobile devices and other gadgets got off to a strong start toward its goal of reaching one billion devices.

"We're humbled and grateful to see the response to Windows 10," corporate vice president Yusuf Mehdi said in a blog post late Thursday.

"We have seen unprecedented demand for Windows 10, with reviews and customer feedback overwhelmingly positive around the globe."

The stakes are high for Microsoft as it pushes out the new operating system for both traditional computers and mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones.

The company is hoping the new system can help it gain traction in mobile, where it lags behind Google Android and Apple iOS, and in emerging technologies for computing.

Windows 10 - Microsoft skipped directly from Windows 8, which got a lackluster response - is being offered as a free upgrade for most devices, making it possible to be available quickly on billions of devices.

It will allow for voice, pen and gesture input, and in some cases biometric identification for improved security.

Mehdi said the company is rolling out the software in phases to make the transition easier.

"Our top priority has been ensuring that everyone has a great upgrade experience, so, we are carefully rolling out Windows 10 in phases, delivering Windows 10 first to our Windows Insiders," he said.

"While we now have more than 14 million devices running Windows 10, we still have many more upgrades to go before we catch up to each of you that reserved your upgrade."

In one sour note, the chief executive of Mozilla, which makes the Firefox Web browser, complained that Windows 10 imposes the new Edge browser as the default option, overriding choices made by users.

"The update experience appears to have been designed to throw away the choice your customers have made about the Internet experience they want, and replace it with the Internet experience Microsoft wants them to have," Mozilla CEO Chris Beard said in an open letter to his Microsoft counterpart Satya Nadella.

Beard said the new operating system makes it more complicated to choose a competing browser such as Firefox.

"It now takes more than twice the number of mouse clicks, scrolling through content and some technical sophistication for people to reassert the choices they had previously made in earlier versions of Windows," Beard said.

"It's confusing, hard to navigate and easy to get lost."

Beard urged Microsoft to "respect people's right to choice and control of their online experience by making it easier, more obvious and intuitive for people to maintain the choices they have already made through the upgrade experience."

Mozilla chief executive Chris Beard has written an open letter to Microsoft's Satya Nadella, criticising the company's decision to make Edge the default browser in Windows 10, even if the user is updating from a system that previously used Chrome or Firefox as the default.

Mr Beard said he was "deeply disappointed" with the decision, accusing Mr. Nadella of throwing away the choice his customers have made about the internet experience they want, and replacing it with the internet experience Microsoft wants them to have.

He said that, while it is still technically possible to preserve people s previous settings and defaults, it now takes "more than twice the number of mouse clicks, scrolling through content and some technical sophistication" for people to reassert their choices.

"These changes aren t unsettling to us because we re the organisation that makes Firefox. They are unsettling because there are millions of users who love Windows and who are having their choices ignored, and because of the increased complexity put into everyone s way," he said.

"We strongly urge you to reconsider your business tactic here and again respect people s right to choice and control of their online experience."

Microsoft said that its priority with Windows 10 was to make the upgrade experience as simple as possible, and that it aimed to provide a "cohesive experience" following the upgrade.

"During the upgrade, consumers have the choice to set defaults, including for web browsing. Following the upgrade, they can easily choose the default browser of their choice," a spokesperson said.

"As with all aspects of the product, we have designed Windows 10 as a service; if we learn from user experience that there are ways to make improvements, we will do so.

This is not the fist time Microsoft has faced controversy over its decision to install a default browser on Windows. In 2009, Microsoft was accused by the European Union of abusing its dominance to stifle competitors to its Internet Explorer web browser.

As a remedy, in 2010, Microsoft agreed to offer Windows buyers a choice of alternatives such as Google s Chrome, Mozilla Firefox and Apple Safari when they first booted up their new operating system.

In 2013, the EU fined Microsoft £485 million, after the company omitted the ballot from Windows 7 Service Pack 1 for 14 months, from May 2011 until July 2012. Microsoft claimed it was a "technical error" and an oversight, but the Competition Commission levied a fine nonetheless.

However, the obligations imposed by that decision expired in 2014, and Microsoft now no longer browser choice screen when users first install Windows.

Internet Explorer is the oldest browser on the market, with a lineage dating back to 1995. And in that 20-year-old browser there s a lot of 20-year-old code, supporting a lot of standards that are no longer in use. At the same time, new technologies and standards evolved for browsers, and IE has proved to be a laggard.

So it was high time for a clean-sheet redesign—a whole new browser from the bottom up. And with Windows 10, we get it, in the form of Microsoft Edge. (Yes, Microsoft wants us to keep that Microsoft in there, just as Google does with Google Chrome.) Here s what we think you ll find most exciting in Microsoft s brand new browser.

First, here s what s not in Microsoft Edge: a slew of old technologies that are no longer common on the Web. They include:

ActiveX: HTML 5 replaces ActiveX controls. However, Microsoft Edge will still support Adobe Flash which may or may not be good news. Browser Helper Objects (BHOs): HTML and JavaScript replace BHOs, which date back to the COM object days of the 1990s. VBScript: JavaScript replaces old Visual Basic code.

Vector Markup Language: Microsoft s old XML language for 2D graphics has been replaced by Scalable Vector Graphics.

What s all that mean to you? Faster load times (since the browser isn t uselessly checking for instances of standards that aren t there anymore). If for some reason you do need to load a page that uses any of these old technologies, you can still use IE; it will still be there on your Windows 10 system.

Microsoft Edge will come with a new rendering engine (Microsoft EdgeHTML) to replace the Trident engine that powered Internet Explorer for decades. The result should be that webpages appear on the screen a lot faster.

Microsoft Edge does a bunch of little, behind-the-scenes things to make browsing the Web safer. For example, it renders each individual page inside a sandbox so if there happens to be malicious software on a page, it won t be able to break out of that page s browser process to do anything like access your hard drive.

Microsoft Edge also implements some new Internet security standards, including HTTP Strict Transport Security (to make Web connections more secure) and HTML 5 Content Security Policy (to protect against cross-site scripting attacks).

Not surprisingly, Microsoft Edge is tightly integrated with Microsoft s Bing search service and with Cortana, Windows 10 s new virtual assistant. That combination should make finding the information you need a lot faster and easier.

So, just as the URL bar in Google's Chrome browser quickly connects you to Google's search tools, so is Microsoft Edge optimized for finding online stuff with Bing. It ll also improve search results by inferring what you may want or need based on previous searches and on your browsing history.

And thanks to Cortana s support for natural-language queries, you ll be able to type questions into Microsoft Edge s address bar and get answers

immediately, without having to perform a full Web search.

Internet Explorer supported browser extensions, but Microsoft Edge improves that support. That s because the new browser s extensions can be built on the same JavaScript and HTML code that developers already use for extensions that work with Google Chrome and Firefox. Microsoft claims that extensions for those other browsers will be convertible to Microsoft Edge with only a few tweaks.

That should mean more/better extensions and add-ons for you.

The only bad news: Microsoft Edge won t have this revamped extension support when Windows 10 initially launches. It will come via an update at a later point.

Everybody shares links, but Microsoft Edge adds the ability to mark up those shared webpages with the electronic equivalent of sticky notes and highlights.

Tap the Make a Web Note button on the Microsoft Edge toolbar, and you can leave notes on a page for others. The Save button will allow you to save the note to Microsoft OneNote, your bookmarks, or your reading list; you can also use the Share button to share your marked-up note.

Who Are The Americans Without Internet Access?

In 2000, only half of American adults used the Internet. Now, 85 percent are connected, and many cannot imagine living any other way. But what about the unconnected 15 percent?

People over the age of 50 or who live in rural areas, have less education, make less money, or are Black or Hispanic are less likely to be plugged in, according to recent data from the Pew Research Center though these factors have different levels of influence.

After the dramatic growth in the number of Internet users between 2000 and 2015, stats have leveled off in recent years. The percentage of adults without Internet access was the same in 2013 as it is now, reports Pew.

A lot of the easy adopters have already been converted, Aaron Smith, associate director at the Pew Research Center, told the New York Times.

Age remains the best predictor of who is not plugged in, the data shows. After age 50, a person s likelihood of not connecting jumps from 6 percent to 19 percent, and after 65 it surges to 39 percent.

Elderly people face the dual barrier of unfamiliarity with Internet-capable devices and having less money to spend on them, the Times reported.

Income is another, weaker predictor for Internet access, finds Pew. People making less than \$30,000 a year were about 10 percent less likely to have Internet access than those in the next highest income bracket, according to the new data, but in 2013 only one in five of those who did not use the Internet cited cost as a reason.

Most surprisingly for the plugged-in generation, most Internet non-users are content to remain so. Only 8 percent of non-users wished to start using the Internet in 2013. Even so, efforts to bring Internet to low-income households are on the rise. President Barack Obama is piloting ConnectHome, an initiative to bring free or discounted broadband Internet to communities assisted by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Last week, the Federal Communications Commission approved Internet provider AT&T s takeover of DirecTV, on the condition that AT&T expand broadband service to 12.5 million locations, including schools and libraries.

Families without Internet access in their homes or in local schools or libraries face a disadvantage that perpetuates a cycle of poverty, proponents of these programs say adults cut off from the Internet miss out on job opportunities and resources, while kids have a harder time completing their homework, hampering success in school and beyond. In a January speech, Mr. Obama called broadband Internet a necessity, not a luxury.

This is about helping local businesses grow and prosper and compete in a global economy, he said. It s about giving the entrepreneur, the small businessperson on Main Street a chance to compete with the folks out in Silicon Valley, or across the globe. It s about helping a student access the online courses and employment opportunities that can help her pursue her dreams.

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